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UNCLAS TAIPEI 003347

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR DS/IP/ITA AND DS/IP/EAP  
DEPT ALSO FOR EAP/TC

FROM AIT KAOHSIUNG BRANCH OFFICE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [TW](#) [CH](#)

SUBJECT: KAOHSIUNG PROTESTS SECRETARY POWELL'S REMARKS

Sensitive But Unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

1. (SBU) A candidate in Taiwan's upcoming Legislative Yuan (LY) elections led a group of around 20 supporters to protest in front of AIT Kaohsiung the morning of October 27. The protest was noisy, but peaceful, and dispersed within half an hour, after a letter of protest was read out for television and print reporters present and then delivered to AIT Kaohsiung. The LY candidate, Huang Wan-chuan, is a Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU) candidate from Kaohsiung County. In his speech and letter of protest, Huang expressed "anger and regret for the Secretary's comments in Beijing that Taiwan is not a sovereign state." Noting that the U.S. "recognized Taiwan's democracy", Huang stated that Taiwan had its people, government and controlled its own territory, all of which "indisputably comprised the components of a sovereign county."

2. (SBU) Separately, the afternoon of October 27, Yan Wen-li, the chairman/owner of a popular local radio station, "Boss (chu-ren) Radio" notified AIT Kaohsiung that he would lead a group of employees to AIT Kaohsiung offices to deliver a protest of Secretary Powell's remarks. The radio station also issued a press release on their plans to protest at AIT. Yan arrived with about a dozen members of his reporting/editorial staff and presented AIT Kaohsiung with a framed letter, "thanking Secretary Powell for reminding the people of Taiwan that they have not yet achieved their independence." Yan asserted that Secretary Powell's remarks would help invigorate the Taiwan independence movement and ensure the founding of the new nation named "Taiwan."

3. (SBU) In both instances, Kaohsiung City police were aware of the planned protests at least an hour or so before they occurred and provided more than sufficient extra police to ensure the small protests were well-controlled and prevented from blocking the entrance to the commercial building in which AIT Kaohsiung is located and/or the floor on which AIT Kaohsiung's office suite is located. Both protests were orderly and dissipated rapidly after the written protests were delivered to AIT Kaohsiung.

4. (SBU) Comment: The protests, while small and brief, are representative of the reaction among many here in the heartland of Taiwan's minority "pro-independence movement" to media reports of the Secretary's interviews. Popular political talk shows on local television and radio stations have also been full of similar sentiments from those sympathetic to Taiwan independence. As Taiwan is also in the midst of an LY election season, the debate around these issues undoubtedly will be seized upon by candidates to gain attention. For that reason, we would not be surprised to see further such protests in the coming days.

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